

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 SP-02 EB-08
/050 W

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R 020952Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9369
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
ALL EC CAPITALS 0334
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 03221

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, FR, PO, EEC
SUBJ: QUAI TRAVAIL OVER PORTUGAL'S EC ADHESION

REFS: A. PARIS 2687. B. PARIS 1162 (EXDIS AND STADIS).
C. LISBON 764.

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON EVE OF EC FONMINS MEETING
JANUARY 31, QUAI'S PORTUGUESE DESK OFFICER WAS STILL
DOUBTFUL NINE WOULD BE ABLE TO AGREE TO PORTUGUESE
PRINCIPLE OF "MEMBERSHIP"; ARGUED THAT ONLY "ASSOCIA-
TION" OFFERED A VIABLE SOLUTION; BUT WAS AFRAID SOARES
MEANT TO HAVE MEMBERSHIP OR NOTHING. IN VIEW OF
SPECIAL PROBLEMS, PORTUGUESE POSE FOR FRENCH INTER-
MINISTERIAL MARGINS FOR MANEUVERING THIS ISSUE IN
PARIS ARE SAID TO BE "EXCEPTIONALLY TIGHT." EVEN SO,
FRENCH POSITION HAS PROGRESSED SINCE PORTUGUESE
FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT HERE LAST FALL, SINCE QUAI
NOW ACCEPTS FACT THAT SENDING SOARES HOME EMPTY-HANDED
IS NOT VIABLE OPTION. END SUMMARY.

2. QUAI'S PORTUGUESE DESK OFFICER DEBENEST CALLED ON
US JANUARY 29, ON EVE OF EC FONMIN'S MEETING, FOR
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RATHER AGONIZED REVIEW OF DILEMMAS WHICH SOARES
INSISTENCE ON FULL "MEMBERSHIP" WAS POSING FOR FRENCH
AND OTHERS AMONG NINE.

3. DEBENEST AGAIN CONFIRMED THAT FRENCH WERE NOW
"KEENLY AWARE" OF IMPORTANCE OF NOT SENDING SOARES
HOME IN FRUSTRATION, SINCE THIS COULD ONLY FURTHER

UNDERMINE HIM DOMESTICALLY AND SEEM LIKE A "EUROPEAN REJECTION" OF PORTUGAL AS A WHOLE, WHICH COULD HAVE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES. AS RESULT, SHE SAID, "THIS WAS NO LONGER AN OPTION."

4. ON OTHER HAND, DEBENEST SAID THAT IF THE NINE WERE TO ACCEPT PORTUGAL'S APPLICATION FOR "MEMBERSHIP," EVEN WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE LONG AND DRAWN OUT, (AS SUGGESTED BY ANDREANI AS POSSIBILITY IN REF B), THE NINE WOULD, IN EFFECT, BE COMMITTING THEMSELVES, IF NOT TO QUICK, BUT, IN ANY CASE, TO AN EVENTUAL SOLUTION OF THE STRUCTURAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS PORTUGUESE ADHESION WOULD POSE. DEBENEST SAID THAT THE CONTINUING FRENCH INTERMINISTERIAL REVIEW THIS QUESTION SUGGESTED THAT, IN FACT, NO REAL "ANSWERS" TO THESE QUESTIONS WERE IN SIGHT. FIRST, FRENCH DOUBTED COMMISSION STUDY COULD BE STRUNG OUT FOR VERY LONG. MOREOVER, ONCE NEGOTIATIONS STARTED, THE DIFFICULTIES WOULD BE ENCOUNTERED ALMOST FROM START. UNLIKE SPAIN, WHICH HAD SIGNIFICANT INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, FRENCH ARE CONVINCED THAT PORTUGAL WAS STRUCTURALLY NOT READY TO COPE WITH EC ECONOMIC REALITIES. AND, NEITHER FRENCH NOR ITALIANS KNEW HOW TO PROTECT THEIR AGRICULTURE FROM PORTUGUESE COMPETITION IN KEY AREAS. EVEN MORE FUNDAMENTALLY, DEBENEST SAID QUAI WAS UNCERTAIN ABOUT LONGER-TERM POLITICAL STABILITY OF PORTUGAL: WHAT, FOR INSTANCE, SHE ASKED SHOULD EC DO IF, HAVING ADMITTED PRINCIPLE OF PORTUGUESE "MEMBERSHIP", IT FOUND ITSELF CONFRONTED BY

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RENEWED NON-DEMOCRATIC (I.E., MILITARY) REGIME, WHICH DEBENEST CONSIDERS DISTINCT POSSIBILITY. IN SUM, EC COMMITMENT TO FULL PORTUGUESE MEMBERSHIP WOULD PLACE BURDEN OF FINDING SOLUTIONS ON EC, A BURDEN, DEBENEST THOUGHT, IT SHOULD NOT ACCEPT.

5. FOR PRESENT NINE ARE SAID TO BE CONTINUING A NOT VERY FRUITFUL EXCHANGE ON POSSIBILITY OF ARRIVING AT A COMMON POSITION--WHICH FRENCH AGREE WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE IN PRINCIPLE--BEFORE SOARES BEGINS HIS TRIP. SO FAR, THEY HAVE ONLY SCRATCHED SURFACE. EC FONMINS IN LONDON ARE EXPECTED ONLY TO CONTINUE TO COMPARE POSITIONS. WHILE SOME AMONG NINE FAVOR FULL MEMBERSHIP, QUAI FEELS THAT BESIDES FRANCE, BELGIUM AND TO EXTENT THE FRG HAD GROWING DOUBTS WHETHER EC SHOULD

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 03221

ACCEPT "MEMBERSHIP" BEFORE SEEING ITS WAY CLEAR TO
SOLVING THE ATTENDANT PROBLEMS. PORTUGAL WAS THEREFORE
NOT LIKELY QUICKLY TO OBTAIN THE POLITICAL ROLE IT
DESIRES ON THIS BASIS.

6. ON OTHER HAND, QUAI THINKS MOST OF THESE PROBLEMS
WOULD DISAPPEAR IF NINE COULD TALK SOARES INTO SOME
KIND OF SPECIAL "ASSOCIATION" ARRANGEMENT IN WHICH
HE COULD GET POLITICAL ROLE HE WANTS FROM OUTSET.
UNFORTUNATELY, QUAI TOO IS AFRAID SOARES MEANS IT WHEN
HE SAYS THAT HE WILL ACCEPT NOTHING SHORT OF FULL
MEMBERSHIP (REF C) AND CONCLUDES THAT HE HAS CONSE-
QUENTLY BUILT A TRAP, NOT ONLY FOR HIMSELF, BUT EVERY-
BODY ELSE INVOLVED. DEBENEST VIEWS THIS RIGIDITY AS
SOARES' FIRST "MAJOR MISTAKE."

7. FINALLY, DEBENEST TRIED TO SOUND US OUT ON DEGREE
OF US INTEREST IN EC "MEMBERSHIP" FOR PORTUGAL. SPEAK-
ING PERSONALLY, EMBOFF SAID THAT WE ARE CONTINUING
TO MAKE EFFORTS TO HELP PORTUGUESE WITH ECONOMIC AND
CERTAIN OTHER PROBLEMS, VIEWED ITS INTEREST IN REJOIN-
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ING EUROPE WITH SYMPATHY, BUT DID NOT WISH TO INJECT

OURSELVES INTO A QUESTION WHICH WAS CLEARLY ONE FOR
EUROPEANS TO RESOLVE.
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